

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fifth Session — Eighteenth Legislature

April 3, 1978

The Assembly met at 2:00 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day

QUESTIONS

Tax on Diesel Fuel

Mr. R.H. Bailey (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Revenue. On Saturday, April 1, the difficulties arose that we talked about in the House before in regard to Alberta dropping their tax on diesel fuel and gasoline.

You had a conversation, as it says in the paper, out of courtesy, with some of the officials in Lloydminster and at that time the paper says that you didn't agree or disagree but you would be contacting them further in regard to the problem. Have you contacted them, and if so what was the nature of your response to them indicating that they were going to arbitrarily drop the gas down in Lloydminster at the seven competitive stations to be with the Alberta stations?

Hon. W.A. Robbins (Minister of Revenue): — Yes, I had a conversation with some people in Lloydminster with respect to the gas tax and told them that we would be back to them very shortly, and we will.

Mr. Bailey: — A supplementary question. Did I understand you to say, Mr. Minister, that your department had not yet made a decision as to how you would treat them? Mr. Minister, the question is that they have stated categorically obviously to the press, that is carried in this story, that they will not be collecting the tax. My supplementary question at this time, sir, is this. If they are allowed not to collect the tax what action will you take against other service stations along the border who subsequently will also refuse to collect the tax?

Mr. Robbins: — The statement as I read it says, gas retailers on the Saskatchewan side of the border say they have stopped collecting provincial gas tax Saturday. Retailers do not collect the tax in the first place. It is collected by the major oil companies.

Mr. Bailey: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If they are not since Saturday, and we are now into Monday — and they have had three days of sales when they have not been collecting the tax on the Saskatchewan side of the border, what measures will you take then, by your department to make sure the revenue is collected by the retailers on the Saskatchewan side of the border who subsequently lowered their gasoline prices?

Mr. Robbins: — Well, they don't collect it in the first place. We have no instant solutions but we expect to have, we think, a reasonable solution very shortly. We will be in touch with them at that time.

Mr. A.N. McMillan (Kindersley): — With respect to the gas situation, (I am not quite sure that the minister has made this clear) I would like to know then that if people in the Kindersley area and the Alsask area, Maple Creek, etc., are going to operate in the same manner as those retailers in Lloydminster, if they will be open to prosecution by your government or if you intend to treat them in the same manner as you have treated the

dealers in the Lloydminster area?

Mr. Robbins: — The government policy will be announced in due course.

Mr. McMillan: — Are we to assume then, Mr. Minister, by your attitude that anyone who, until such time as your policy is announced, goes ahead and does not bother to collect your provincial tax for you, that they will not be open to prosecution by your government?

Mr. Robbins: — No, I don't think they should come to that conclusion. After all, the law is there. We expect to make the alterations as quickly as we can.

Mr. C.P. MacDonald (Indian Head-Wolseley): — I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Revenue. Could the minister give the assurance to the members of the House that the service station operators in Lloydminster and Kindersley and other points in western Saskatchewan will be treated identical to those retailers who refuse to collect the sales tax and who were never prosecuted and were never penalized, can the Minister of Revenue give assurance that the service station operators will be treated identical to those other retail outlets that in the past have refused to collect the sales tax?

Mr. Robbins: — I said the government's policy would be announced in due course.

Rate Increase to Elevator Companies

Mr. D.M. Ham (Swift Current): — A question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker. It has been brought to our attention that the Canada Grain Commission has authorized an increase of the maximum handling charges of grain by the elevator companies. Since 1974 the increase has already risen by some 300 per cent and the present authorization brings it to a total of \$94 million. Would you, Mr. Premier, take immediate steps to contact the federal government to roll back these increases?

Hon. E. Kaeding (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the fact that rates have been set at this time. I know that there has been some discussion as to what the rates should be and the commission, of course, is hearing the farm organizations at Saskatoon or were hearing them last week. Whatever decision will be made by the board, we are not aware at this point in time what the decision is. I assume that they will make a decision on the information that they get at the hearings.

Mr. L.W. Birkbeck (Moosomin): — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Minister, you would be aware that the Premier in his remarks in reply to a question to me regarding demurrage charges and the question of cost to Saskatchewan farmers — Mr. Minister, would you and through the Premier make strong recommendations to the federal government that these authorized rates be rolled back, that these increases be rolled back? We have high enough costs to the Saskatchewan grain producers now and, Mr. Minister, you would be aware that it is now costing as much to handle grain, transport grain that is, 800 miles as it is to raise it 80 feet in an elevator. We are just asking if you would make these recommendations to the federal government, have these increases rolled back. Will you do that, Mr. Minister?

Mr. Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, I think that we have to recognize that there are costs in the grain-handling system and the Canadian Grain Commission, that part of their job last week was to determine what the level of handling charges should be. I think none of

us would want to suggest that we should cut the grain-handling system back to the point where they would not be able to continue to expand or to improve their system. I think it is part of the job of the commission to determine as what level that rate should be. Certainly we will look at the rates when they are announced and we will make a decision at that time whether we think that we should make a presentation to the commission.

Mr. R.L. Collver (Leader of the Conservative Opposition): — Since the dramatic increase up to a maximum of 20.5 cents has in fact been suggested in the newspaper in Saskatoon on Saturday, and since the CGC has in fact seemed to have made its determination on this or even prior to any formal declaration of the determination, would the minister not agree that dramatic increases in grain handling charges many have the effect of detouring the entire recommendations of the Hall Commission and unless the provincial government of the province of Saskatchewan makes reference to the Canadian Grain Commission to roll these price increases back, the effects of the Hall Commission could be in serious jeopardy?

Mr. Kaeding: — It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that we are assuming something. I don't know that there has been any rate set at the present time and I think that we are just assuming that there is going to be a massive increase. I know that there has been a request for an increase and we are only assuming that the Canadian Grain Commission may do with that. Up until we can get some kind of a determination from the commission, it is pretty hard for us to act on it.

Mr. J. Wiebe (Morse): — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Minister of Agriculture: is it not true that the Canadian Grain Commission, in its determinations this week, are only setting out the maximum that the grain companies can charge in the handling of their rates and that the farmer-owned co-operatives have, in the past, not been charging that maximum. It is just to allow them a little bit of flexibility, that the farmer-owned co-ops within the province of Saskatchewan will use the input from their membership in determining what the eventual rate will be?

Mr. Kaeding: — Yes, this is true, Mr. Speaker. The farm co-operatives have not been charging the maximum allowed under the existing rates for all kinds of grain. They were up at about 70 per cent of the maximum charge allowed for wheat, oats and barley. They were charging about the maximum for the oil seeds. I am sure that the farm elevator system will be cognizant of the desires of the membership in this regard and if the maximum was allowed of higher than they need, they will set the level at what they think they need and not take the maximum as they did before.

Bayda Commission Report

Mr. E.C. Malone (Leader of the Liberal Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier.

There has been much speculation in the press in recent days, both local press and national press, about the future of the uranium industry in Saskatchewan. The speculation being triggered, no doubt, by Denison's offer to buy Inexco's holding for some \$163 million. As well as speculation, there is still some uncertainty in the industry and in Saskatchewan, as to what is going to happen with the industry, certainly arising from two things. 1. The Bayda Commission report has still not been filed with the legislature or with the Minister in charge of Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation. Perhaps most important of all, uncertainty as to the government's

position in connection with that particular report. In an attempt to get away from one of these uncertain positions, I should like to ask the Premier, now, if he is prepared to state in this legislature what the position of the government will be in connection with the Bayda report. Are you going to follow the recommendations made by Mr. Justice Bayda whether they be pro-development, anti-development, or somewhere in between, or are you going to just take that report and use it as one of the other factors that you will consider as to whether or not uranium proceeds in this province.

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct when he says there is uncertainty with respect to uranium development in Saskatchewan. We are awaiting the Bayda Commission report. We propose to give that report great weight. We do not propose at this time to commit ourselves to follow the recommendations of the Bayda Commission report sight unseen. We will give it very careful consideration and we will be attempting to enunciate a government policy as soon after receipt of the Bayda Commission report as is conveniently possible.

Mr. Malone: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. What other factors are you going to be considering, as well as the Bayda Commission report, that have not already been considered by Mr. Justice Bayda? We have this commission. It has now been sitting for some months, armed with a lot of money given to it by the government to get a full hearing of the issue. I am saying to you at this time, if you are not going to follow the recommendations of the Bayda Commission report, why have the commission to begin with? And secondly, what other factors are you going to take into consideration?

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I obviously have to try a little harder. I did not say that we are not going to follow the Bayda Commission report, so any questions predicated on a supposition starting, 'if you are not going to follow the Bayda Commission report' is obviously irrelevant, and I propose to treat it as irrelevant. Secondly, with respect to matters considered by the Bayda Commission, I have no doubt that we will not consider anything not considered by the Bayda Commission. However, it is entirely possible that we might give a greater weight or a lesser weight to one element considered by the Bayda Commission than the commission did itself. We clearly will not, obviously cannot, assign, delegate to the commission the job of making a final decision on government policy. That is our responsibility and we cannot avoid it or evade it by appointing a commission, however valuable the commission report will be, as I expect that report will be valuable.

Mr. Malone: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Premier could indicate when he anticipates receiving the Bayda Commission report, and indeed the period of time that we will have to wait after that report has been received, until government policy is finally announced?

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I regret to say that I cannot tell the hon. member when I anticipate receiving the Bayda Commission report. We have made known to the commission our desire to have the report as early as possible. I think they know that and I think they will be making it available to us as early as possible. I expect it during the month of April certainly, but I have no assurance from the commission that it will be forthcoming during the month of April. With respect to how long it will take us to formulate a government position following receipt of the Bayda Commission report. I think it would be unwise for me to commit myself without having seen the Bayda Commission report. It may be that they will have considered all the factors and will have considered them with the approximate degree of emphasis which we, as a government, would wish to give them and accordingly, their conclusions and ours

would coincide. It may well be that we would have to do additional work because of proposals they will put forward about how uranium should be developed. I cannot anticipate that, accordingly, I cannot anticipate the time which will be needed to complete the work, the scope of which I do not know.

\$45 Million Loan to Sask Power Corporation

Mr. W.C. Thatcher (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, last week it was brought to life that there was a \$45 million loan (or \$44.5 million loan) taken out through your department for SPC (Sask Power Corporation). Initially you denied very ferociously the existence of such a loan which was taken in 1977, repayable in 1979. Mr. Minister, in light of the fact that from your statements it is obvious that you were not aware of the loan, would the minister tell this Assembly exactly who was empowered to make such a loan on behalf of the Department of Finance? What official or officials? Would the minister also briefly elaborate on the discretionary powers that such individuals obviously have? In essence, I guess I am asking, what are their limits?

Hon. W.E. Smishek (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member raised the question the other day I did indicate to him that I would check on the matter. I do find, Mr. Speaker, that a line of credit was arranged by the Sask Power Corporation, till now \$44.5 million. This line of credit, Mr. Speaker, is for making progress payments on two drag lines that are under construction. The authority was granted to the Sask Power Corporation to arrange for this line of credit. The Department of Finance and the government were aware of it. When the member raised the question I was not able to recall it but there is no question that the government did approve and authorize the Sask Power Corporation to arrange this line of credit.

Mr. Thatcher: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In the light of the minister's admission that he was not aware of it but that it was government approved, would the minister again elaborate what official or officials made the decision that they would borrow \$45 million from the bank and how did they arrive at that decision that it would be the Chemical Bank? How did they arrive at that decision that it would be in the United States?

In short, Mr. Minister, I am asking, since this was the decision that was made in the bureaucracy and not at the cabinet level or at the executive cabinet level, Mr. Minister, please tell us who these officials are that make these decisions and what are their powers?

Mr. Smishek: — Mr. Speaker, I do not know what more I can tell the hon. member, I did tell the hon. member in this House that the arrangements were made by senior officials of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation after getting the authority to do so, by the government. The government authorized them to arrange for line of credit. They didn't arrange for line of credit without of authority. They had the authority to arrange for a line of credit.

Mr. Thatcher: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, I would ask you how these decisions were made on a two-year short term not on the American market in light of the situation at that time? I am asking you again, Mr. Minister, where is the level of accountability? You have said, on record, that you knew nothing about it and, therefore, you are not accountable. Recent events have made this into a very questionable deal. Mr. Minister, again I ask you, what is the level of accountability?

Who will account to the people of Saskatchewan on this very terrible loss that could quite conceivably take place?

Hon. J.R. Messer (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, I have heard the member for Thunder Creek undertake to pursue this loan for several days now and it is certainly based on inaccurate information. Let me firstly take him back, Mr. Speaker, to the Hansard of March 29, where the Minister of Finance, when the question was asked, said, and I quote:

Any borrowing that is done is done by the government and not by the Power corporation and I am not aware of us borrowing on the American market in 1977 for bonds repayable 1979.

The first point that I want to make there, Mr. Speaker, is that the minister simply said that there was not money borrowed to his knowledge at that time. He did not say distinctly that there was not any such borrowing. There was borrowing, Mr. Speaker. It was done in a manner that is within the policy of the province of Saskatchewan first approved by the Department of Finance and then the negotiations carried out by the Department of Finance and the Saskatchewan Power Corporation with ultimately, in this instance, the Chemical Bank in New York. It is not accurate to undertake to mislead this House in that it is a short-term loan payable in 1979. As has already been pointed out, Mr. Speaker, it was a line of credit. It was undertaken as bridge financing and it has convertible features to be, if so desired, turned into a long-term loan. It is therefore, Mr. Speaker, inaccurate to undertake to try and mislead the House and the people of Saskatchewan that this money has to be repaid in 1979. It has always had the convertible feature of being changed to a long-term loan without any penalties that we are not already aware of, Mr. Speaker. So that I would suggest that the member who continues to pursue this on inaccurate information take into consideration what I have conveyed to him before he undertakes any supplementary questions.

Mr. Thatcher: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — The member for Indian Head-Wolseley on a final supplementary.

Mr. MacDonald: — I wonder if the Minister of Finance could indicate why the government has taken a complete about face today when last day the Premier said all the government ministers of the Treasury Bench were responsible for establishing policy. Today the minister says the government was completely aware, and rightly they should be . . . any time you borrow \$45 million, can the minister please explain why the about face today from what the Premier said last question period.

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, it is just unreasonable to suggest that there has been as about face. I think the record will speak for itself and I invite all hon. members to examine the record and see whether there is any about face as alleged, improperly alleged I suggest, by the member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

Staking of Claims in Northern Saskatchewan

Mr. S.J. Cameron (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Mineral Resources. In March of this year Imperial Oil announced that a significant uranium discovery had been made by it in the consequence of the drilling of 13 or 17 holes in northern Saskatchewan. That is now reported to have led to a rush of staking in

that area. My question to the minister is whether or not it is a fact that there is a rush of staking now going on as reported? Secondly, why, if that is a fact, is the government permitting that activity to take place in the absence of the Bayda report?

Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, yes, there was an announcement that a significant find of uranium, a potential find of uranium, had been discovered in northern Saskatchewan. The member asks if there is a rush of staking in that area and I am not able, with precision, to answer that question, but I think that it would be, generally speaking, correct to say that most of that area has been staked for a number of years and that there is very little area remaining in that particular part of the province that is unstaked at this particular point in time.

Mr. Cameron: — By way of supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Why, in view of the fact that we have yet to receive the Bayda report and act upon it, is your department continuing to permit additional exploration, the sinking of additional holes and in some cases, additional staking. All that activity is still going on in northern Saskatchewan despite the fact that we don't yet have the report and no decision in respect of it. Why has your department not put a stop to that activity until we receive the report?

Mr. Messer: — Mr. Speaker, firstly, and the Premier pointed it out earlier, it would be improper for us to undertake to conclude what Bayda will be recommending to the government. It would be improper for us to undertake to conclude what the position, the final position, of the government is going to be. We certainly are not misleading anyone in the province of Saskatchewan. All of those principles or interests who are involved in exploring and developing uranium in northern Saskatchewan or not until we have the benefit of the Bayda inquiry. So they are there risking their money and their time and their effort pending the result of the Bayda inquiry and the Government of Saskatchewan's decision in relation to mining.

Mr. Cameron: — Mr. Speaker, an additional supplementary.

In view of reports that northern Saskatchewan is now, "The hottest uranium play in the world," may I ask the minister whether he is prepared to give us an assurance that the proposed purchase by Denison of the Inexco properties which requires your written approval under the terms of your agreements for Inexco will not be given, will not be decided upon until after the Bayda report is in and some decisions have been made in that respect?

Mr. Messer: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member is asking if the right of first refusal that the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation has in regard to the Key Lake shares will not be exercised — well then if the member is asking for some assurance from the government in regard to endorsement of the proposed sale by Inexco to Denison it would not come about until after the Bayda inquiry gives its report to the government and the government makes its decision in regard to uranium mining, if that is the member's question, the answer is that the terms and conditions of the proposal by Denison to Inexco for the sale of the one-third interest that Inexco holds is subject to the Bayda inquiry's report and the ultimate decision of the Government of Saskatchewan. That is in fact, Mr. Speaker, a term and a condition of the proposed sale.

An Hon. Member: — Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order.

Negotiation for Borrowing

Mr. R.L. Collver (Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party): — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question also the harassed member responsible for Sask Power. I would first of all quote from his department or his organization's report which says:

The province borrowed an advance to the corporation, \$126.8 million to finance capital construction during 1977. A further \$44.5 million was borrowed from the Chemical Bank of New York on a short-term arrangement extending to 1979.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a quotation directly from his report (nothing to do with bridge financing). Our question today is this — very simple. What official in either the Department of Finance or Sask Power negotiated and concluded the arrangement for \$44.5 million with the Chemical Bank whether it was for bridge financing, whether it was for short-term borrowings, whether it was for whatever purpose, what official concluded and negotiated the loan? That is our question.

Mr. Messer: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member is directing that question to myself as chairman of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, until some evidence can be brought forward that there was any departure from the policy of either the Saskatchewan Power Corporation or departure from the policy of the government in regard to such borrowings, and the member indicates that it may well have been bridge financing, which in fact it was, I don't believe there is any reason for us to undertake to convey to the Legislative Assembly the persons or person involved in undertaking to complete those loans. Both the Minister of Finance and myself as chairman responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation believe that they were done within the policies of the government and there has been no error or reason for concern in relation to that particular bridge financing agreement.

Mr. Collver: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: — A final supplementary.

Mr. Collver: — A final supplementary did you say, Mr. Speaker? Well then I will have to make it brief.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the minister what we have seen here today — I direct my question to either the Minister responsible for Sask Power or to the Minister of Finance — the question quite simply is this, unless (surely the minister must agree) either a minister of the Crown, an elected official, is responsible for the borrowing of \$44.5 million or the policy of the government is such that a non-elected official is responsible for that. Surely the minister must agree, do you not, that we as elected representatives are entitled to know with such a significant amount of money which official.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! The member for Wascana.

Borrowing by Crown Corporations

Mr. E.F.A. Merchant (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, question to the Minister of Finance. The minister has previously indicated that borrowing by Crown corporations is all within the Minister of Finance ambit and I wonder whether the reality of the truth of that statement has changed. Now the minister says today that this was authorized. I wonder whether the minister would indicate whether there was a specific authorization for this borrowing at the cabinet level or whether the borrowing was given under a general authorization to some public servant. If in fact it was given . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! The member for Saskatoon-Sutherland.

Short Term Loaning

Mr. H.W. Lane (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — A question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, I think this question is fair in light of the fact that you have been practitioner of law in the province of Saskatchewan. In your experience you have seen clients and, indeed, probably helped clients arrange for short term borrowings and in certain events where long term credit was not available or applicable, I am sure also that the Premier has taken his client into some financial institution and arranged for credit on a short term basis which is called in the business a line of credit which is another way of referring to short term loaning that fluctuates. It is simply short term credit. Now, my question is this. Do you and your government have a different definition of line of credit than the traditional definition which you used as a practicing solicitor in the province and once again I ask the Premier to tell us who the official was that authorized this particular loan in line of questioning?

Mr. Speaker: — Order! The member's question is out of order.

Authorization to Borrow Money

Mr. MacDonald: — I would like to direct a question to either the Minister of Finance or the Minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Would they please be willing to table the cabinet minutes or the minutes of the board of directors of the meeting of the Saskatchewan Power corporation to indicate authorization by cabinet or by the board of directors for the civil service or the Saskatchewan Power Corporation to borrow \$44 million?

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, there have been many questions and attempted questions. Let me say this. We have no quarrel whatever with giving the name of the official who made the arrangements. That's obvious. It is of no consequence since it was made within government policy but if hon. members want the name obviously, fine, and it is probably Mr. Meiklejohn, the — not treasury and debt management. He's got a new name — the direct of investment and financial services or alternatively the Deputy Minister of Finance. He may well have had assistance in the arrangement from the comptroller of the Power Corporation. Those would be the officials involved. We will be happy to tell them who made the arrangements and under what authority.

Mr. MacDonald: — He didn't answer my question.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

POINT OF ORDER

Unparliamentary Language

Mr. Thatcher: — Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, in the Legislative Assembly an

allegation was made that I had used certain unparliamentary language in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. I did not have an opportunity and I accept the responsibility for that, I, at a very inappropriate time, made light of a situation and you very correctly put me in my chair, but I did not have an opportunity to deny the allegation that was made and I would, therefore, like to do so today, Mr. Speaker. Some time has past. I believe that you have probably had sufficient time to examine the record. I would, therefore, Mr. Speaker, in light of my denial, ask you to request the member involved to deny it, either substantiate the charges that he has made in normal parliamentary fashion or else to withdraw such.

Hon. E. Kramer (Minister of Highways): — Mr. Speaker, I heard the member say exactly the same thing as Bill Allen did, the member for Rosemont. That's one more for you and I will not withdraw it because I heard you.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Speaker, may I speak to the point of order? Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! I will draw to the member for Thunder Creek this citation from Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, Fourth Edition, Citation 70, stating in part:

A point of order cannot be raised on a point of order.

Therefore, the member's point of order is out of order.

Mr. R.L. Collver (Leader of the Conservative Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: — What's the point of order?

Mr. Collver: — My point of order, quite simply, Mr. Speaker, is this — when a member, I understand, according to the rules, when a member refuses or withdraws a remark or states that he did not make the remark, surely it is incumbent upon, Mr. Speaker, to believe the member who rises in his place and says, "I did not make that remark" and therefore any remark that was ascribed to me in that way must be withdrawn by the member opposite.

Mr. Speaker: — I think I have made my ruling on that. I will take the member for Regina South.

Mr. Thatcher: — May I rise on a point of privilege then?

Mr. Speaker: — Order! I think we are getting into this area where there is no . . . with regard to my ruling the other day, I suggest the member check the ruling the other day and we will find, according to that ruling which I took some time to prepare, that a lot of points of privilege, so-called, are not in fact points of privilege at all.

Mr. Thatcher: — Mr. Speaker, respectfully, I do not recall a ruling that you made at that particular time.

Mr. Speaker: — I suggest the member read the Whites, it's in the Whites. The member for Regina South.

PRIORITY OF DEBATE

Increased Uranium Exploration and Development Activity

Mr. S.J. Cameron (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if before the orders of the day if I might move a matter have priority of debate.

Mr. Speaker, I delivered notice of my intention to do this to your office, I think in accordance with the rules. I would want to move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by Mr. MacDonald that:

Priority of debate be given to a matter of urgent public importance and I state the matter to be the need, in the fact of increasing uranium exploration and development activity in northern Saskatchewan as reflected: (i) by the proposed purchase by Denison Mines, Canada's largest uranium producer of Key Lake uranium properties for \$163 million to satisfy its recent commitment in Ontario; (ii) the continuing large scale expenditures in Saskatchewan in uranium related activity by a host of world-wide corporations; (iii) the allocation to SMDC of \$40 million to take effect, this day, (this being the first working day of the new fiscal year) for uranium development activity; (iv) reports on Saturday, April 1 that Saskatchewan is now among "the hottest uranium plays" in the world, including an assessment by Dominion Securities that 1978 will see increasing activity and that drilling "is reaching a pitch", to declare an immediate moratorium on any further uranium activity pending receipt and consideration of the report of the Bayda inquiry and a decision by the government, after reference of the question to the legislature for debate, of whether or to what extent Saskatchewan will permit uranium development.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Notice regarding this matter proposed for priority of debate was received by the Clerk (in the Clerk's office) at 10:04 a.m., for which I thank the hon. member. I refer all hon. members to Rule 17(6) which states that the matter proposed for an urgent debate must be in order and of urgent importance. The proposed matter is not in violation of Rule 17(10) and is of public importance. The vital question remaining to be answered is whether it is urgent for the Assembly to set aside all of its business to discuss this matter.

The conditions of this situation would not change if the Assembly waited the normal two days for the proper notice in order to have a full debate. Since there is an opportunity within the proper framework of parliamentary procedure to debate this topic, I, therefore, rule that the matter is not urgent enough to set aside all other business of the Assembly today.

Mr. C.P. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, would it be possible to speak to your ruling?

Mr. Speaker: — No.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

Unparliamentary Language

Mr. R.L. Collver (Leader of the Conservative Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of personal privilege. Today in this Assembly the member for The Battlefords stated categorically that he heard a member on this side of the House make certain unparliamentary remarks last Thursday.

I have here the record of last Thursday. The unparliamentary remarks do not appear in this record, save for those mentioned from the mouth of the member for Regina Rosemont, at no place in this record. I ask, Mr. Speaker, that that member be required to withdraw or prove.

Mr. Speaker: — Order. The member is opening a subject that has previously been closed in the legislature and I don't believe the matter can be raised again.

I made a statement on March 30, on page 800 of the Debates when I called the House to order and said - "I think the members of the House should be old enough and mature enough to control their emotions in this House as it is necessary to conduct the business of this House." And I said . . . order! "I did not hear any comment of that nature since I was absorbed in my duties here and didn't hear what the member for Thunder Creek said. I was aware that he dropped his papers rather loudly and I am unaware of why that happened, whether it was a case of nervousness or something else. I am not aware of any comments that the member may have made. I don't know whether it is on the record or not."

Now it seems to me a dispute is arising about something which somebody claims is not on the record and I am not in a position to make a judgment on whether the member heard something or did not hear something in the legislature. There are comments going on across the floor all the time and I don't make rulings on them. I didn't hear them, I didn't hear the comments that were suggested that other people heard, other people say they heard them. It is quite possible the comments went on and were not picked up by the transcribing service. And the member for Thunder Creek raised on a point of order today, which is not permitted, according to the rules. Therefore, I conclude the matter now.

Mr. Collver: — I rise again on a matter of privilege. The only thing in the record is the accusation by the . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! I think I dealt with the matter and we are just wasting further time kicking it around the Chamber.

POINT OF ORDER

Priority of Debate Ruling by Mr. Speaker

Mr. Cameron: — May I ask a different point of order, Mr. Speaker, I shouldn't want, Mr. Speaker, to construe it as a questioning of Mr. Speaker's earlier decision with respect to the matter of priority of debate which I have put in, but may I ask Mr. Speaker for clarification for the future.

Mr. Speaker refers to a member being able, with two days notice, to have a matter debated in the Assembly and Mr. Speaker has twice ruled on matters of priority of debate for that reason that they shouldn't be brought before us. May I say, Mr. Speaker, that the rule is, once a member has a matter on the order paper he can't place a second

one on until the first one is disposed of. So that means, Mr. Speaker, that any of us who have resolutions pending on the paper that have not yet been spoken to, are not able then for that reason to raise these priorities of debate. That's the first point, Mr. Speaker.

Secondly, is as I read Rule 17(6), may I have your liberty to read it to you, and as I interpret it, it says, a member that is putting in a request for priority debate hands a written statement of the matter proposed to be discussed to Mr. Speaker, who if he thinks it is in order, and of urgent public importance, reads it out and asks whether the member has the leave of the Assembly. The question may then be put and if 15 members rise in their place the matter would then go on to debate. It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that having given you the thing, Mr. Speaker having ruled that it was in order and that it was of public importance. I am not sure whether, Mr. Speaker, had concluded it was urgent but it was of some public importance and had some sense of urgency attached to it. My question to Mr. Speaker is: whether or not in those circumstances it shouldn't be put to the members and if 15 rise, then the debate take place, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: — No. I concluded and explained the ruling, if I may just reply to the member for a brief moment, that the matter was not of urgent enough importance to deal with at this time. I also said in my statement that there were opportunities for the member to discuss it. I would say that there are opportunities now for the member to discuss it and there were opportunities, in fact, prior to this time for the member to discuss it.

POINTS OF ORDER ON QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. H.W. Lane (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — On a point of order on question period. Mr. Speaker, I asked a question of the Premier regarding whether he felt that in government circles there was any difference in the definition between line of credit as customarily used in the market place. I also asked in that question, the matter of whether or not he would name the official who was responsible for the borrowings. Mr. Speaker did not allow me to complete the question or the Premier to answer. I find that strange in light of the fact that subsequently the question was put to him and indeed the Premier did answer the question, so if it is not urgent, why was it allowed to go forward subsequently?

Mr. Speaker: — The rules state that the member must not multiply with slight variations a similar question on the same point. Now the first part of the member's question was quite in order. But he became out of order when he said, "Will the minister name the official," which had been asked two or three times before. I thought we had taken up enough time. It was obvious that no one was prepared at that time to answer who the official was. However, on a subsequent question by another member, a minister did decide to answer who the member was that took the responsibility for it. It was just volunteered at that time.

Mr. E.F.A. Merchant (Regina Wascana): — I would like to rise on a point of order after all of those points of order which were important. Though I usually don't particularly wonder why you have sat me down, I wonder if you would examine the record about my question today which asked about a specific authorization or a general authorization.

Mr. Speaker: — Yes, I dealt with the member for Nipawin, the member for Wascana and the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland all in the same manner, because all were in

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some way pursuing the same question which was, "Who was the official that authorized it?" The member for Wascana's question was along the same lines and that doesn't comply with the rules because it is multiplying with slight variation a similar question on the same point.

Mr. Merchant: — With respect, Mr. Speaker, I think if you examine the record, you will find that I was seeking information about cabinet authorization, either a general cabinet authorization, facilitating decisions being made by public servants or a specific cabinet authorization in this case. If Mr. Speaker didn't understand the question, or I didn't put it well so that it was understood, I apologize. Certainly my question was not to find out which public servant had blown \$8 million. I wasn't that interested.

Mr. Speaker: — Well, I think without pursuing the matter any further, I will state that I noted the same earmark on the question as I noted on the member for Nipawin's question and following the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland. I denied them all for the same reason.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Motion for Interim Supply

Hon. W.E. Smishek (Minister of Finance): — Chairman, I move the following resolution:

Resolved that a sum not exceeding \$137,896,430 being approximately one-twelfth of the amount of each of the several sums to be voted as set forth in the Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1979, laid before the Assembly at the present session, be granted to Her Majesty on account for the 12 months ending March 31, 1979.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Smishek: — Mr. Chairman, I move the following resolution:

Resolved that towards making good the supply granted to Her Majesty on account of certain expenses of the public service for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1979, the sum of \$137,896,430 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund.

Motion agreed to.

The committee reported resolutions.

Resolutions agreed to and read a first and second time.

Hon. Mr. Smishek (Minister of Finance): — - moved first reading of Bill No. 28 - An Act for the Granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service for the fiscal year, ending the 31st day of March, 1979.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the first, second and third time.

ROYAL ASSENT

At 2:56 o'clock p.m. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor having entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the Throne and gave Royal Assent to the bills presented to him.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

Health - Vote 32

Mr. Chairman: — Order! We are on page 51 on Health. We are on item 1.

Item 1 (continued)

Mr. R.L. Collver (Leader of the Conservative Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I just have a few brief remarks to make today with reference to health. I am glad we are still on the Department of Health and the expenditures for the Department of Health because, of course, health encompasses so many areas, Mr. Speaker. There is the health of body, physical as it were. There is the health of the body spiritual and there is the health of the body politic. I would like to make a few remarks today specifically directed at those members of the Legislative Assembly who happened to be in their places today during question period with reference to the health of the body politic and the expenditures on health that we have in Saskatchewan and how they are related.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, I would like to read from the edition of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, a section of that form. Section 145 reads as follows:

It has been formally ruled by Speakers in the Canadian Commons that a statement by an hon. member respecting himself and . . .

Mr. Romanow: — On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: — Order! State your point of order please.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Chairman, my point of order is this. The member is quoting from a parliamentary document during the course of Health estimates, Vote 1. No matter how generous Mr. Chairman may be, it surely is a gross extension of Vote 1 to permit a reading or recitation of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Procedures.

We have heard, too often, lectures on decorum from the member for Nipawin, while the actions belie those words. I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that you rule this line of comment out of order.

Mr. Chairman: — Order. I - Order please, order. Order! I believe that the member is permitted to look at a parliamentary book if it is relevant to the item under discussion and that is Item 1 under Health but in no other way can I permit it. That is the way that I have to rule.

Mr. Collver: — Mr. Chairman, I certainly understand that and I do appreciate it. I hope you will give me enough leeway to make my point under the Department of Health estimates as to the expenditure on Health, and how this particular section refers to the health of the body politic in Saskatchewan which in turn necessitates the expenditure on the Department of Health for the government of the province of Saskatchewan in keeping with the healthy population and healthy MLAs in this province.

Mr. Chairman: — I can only say that no hon. member can refer to anything that has happened previously today, or any other day, other than what is dealt with at present under Health estimates and I have to rule it out of order.

Mr. Collver: — Mr. Chairman, I have not yet referred to anything that happened previously today or anything else . . . (interjection - inaudible) . . . Oh, well I said anyone who happened to be here would know about the health of the body politic. It is a very short section. If you are afraid of Section 145, then perhaps the members . . . There are only two more sentences . . . If you would let me please proceed to read this section so that - well I am sure that many of you would be very solicitous of hearing that section. It would be well within the bounds of your . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order! I think I made my ruling and I hope the hon. member will accept it as what I think is proper. He says that he has not referred in his opening statement. He referred to what he was going to mention about the member for - and I am referring to the member for Thunder Creek - the statement that was made and we all, I think, acknowledge this was what it was relevant to and what is referred to. Now I am asking the hon. member to proceed with Item 1 and to deal with it as we see it here under the Item 1 of Health.

Mr. Collver: — Mr. Chairman, if that is the ruling then so be it. We will certainly turn to the estimates under Item 1 and I am sure that we can find something under Item 1 that will relate to the matter which I wish to bring before this Assembly because if the Attorney General is so afraid of Section 145 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, he is afraid to . . . (interjection - inaudible) . . . Oh sure, Mr. Chairman, what I would like to know is this in terms of health . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order. Order, please! Order from both sides! I do not appreciate and I do not think any member appreciates - at least if they are hon. members they should not appreciate any innuendoes or things that are passed across from one member to the other on either side of the House. I think we are here to do a duty for the province and if you agree then I ask you to adhere to the rules. I ask all members to adhere to the rules and I am going to be watching as closely as possible because I think it is time that we were making some progress and I ask for your co-operation. All of you.

Mr. Collver: — You will certainly receive my co-operation and as long as those rules that you just ascribed to and suggested are applied evenly to all members of this Assembly, in order that this Assembly might get on with the business, I am certain that everyone wants to get on with the Department of Health and get off Item 1 on the Department of Health.

We, quite frankly, had no intention whatsoever of speaking on Item 1 in the Department of Health today, absolutely none. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley was going to proceed for what he has on Item 1 and then we were going to proceed down the list and we will do that yet, Mr. Chairman. However, since it is not possible for us, Mr. Chairman, under any other rule of the Assembly, to speak about an urgent and important matter, then I don't see why we shouldn't be prepared or be allowed to discuss the Department of Health as we see fit, as it goes with the health of the nation . . . Mr. Chairman, you are going to retain order, I see, with these members across the way. You are going to cause me chagrin but not them, I gather.

Mr. Chairman: — Order! I don't think that was necessary. I think that I just called them to order and if you would listen I think that you would see this.

Mr. Collver: — Mr. Chairman, we spend \$200 million or \$420 million - \$435 million is budgeted under the Department of Health this year, \$435 million. It costs a great deal of money for members to sit in this Legislative Assembly today. A great deal of money and they would all like to get on with the business of discussing the \$435 million. And certainly we want to do the same. All we want to do is to read into the record, Section 145 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules. Is Mr. Chairman prepared to allow me to do that?

Mr. Chairman: — Is it relevant it Item 1?

Mr. Collver: — I think it is very relevant to the Department of Health's expenditures. Yes, I do.

Mr. Chairman: — If it is relevant to item 1 I will allow it, but otherwise it is out.

Mr. Collver: — Section 145 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms says as follows:

It has been formally ruled by Speakers in the Canadian Commons, that a statement by an hon. member respecting himself and peculiarly within his own knowledge must be accepted but it is not unparliamentary to temperately criticize statements.

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order! You have made your statement there. How does it relate back to this one, Item 1?

Mr. Collver: — Mr. Chairman, it is not finished yet. I have two sentences more, in section 145. I will be happy to read them and then I can make the relevance. Mr. Chairman, has ruled me in order and I am going to try and make it relevant to the Department of Health.

Mr. Chairman: — I will allow you to read two sentences and you have to relate it back to this.

Mr. Collver: — Thank you, very much.

... but it is not unparliamentary to temperately criticize statements made by a member as being contrary to the facts, but no imputation of intentional falsehood is permissible. (That is sentence number one).

(Sentence number two). A Statement made by a member in his place is considered as made upon honor and cannot be questioned in the house or out of it.

Now, Mr. Chairman, when a statement, by an hon. member, is made in this Assembly as it relates to . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order! On the point of order, please.

Mr. Romanow: — Mr. Chairman, I ask you to rule, again, the member to come to order in this House. He has read section 145 from Beauchesne, or whatever he wants to do. We clearly know what he is aiming at. He is aiming with respect to the ruling of Mr.

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Chairman, related in the comments of the member, or the alleged comments, of the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) and the comments of the member for The Battlefords (Mr. Kramer). Whether he has a good point or a bad point I don't know, but I do know one thing, Mr. Chairman, this is not the correct procedure or form for him to fight that battle.

Now, he has had these estimates for four days. He continues to show an abuse of approach to the Chair. I ask him and his caucus, please, Mr. Chairman, for you to keep them in order. There is absolutely no tie-in to the votes before us.

Mr. Chairman: — Order, please! I think, as I mentioned earlier, that anything that was stated previously before we broke into this committee is not relevant to this estimates and I ruled it out of order then. I will just say this, that the health of the body politic that the member refers to has no relevance, no relevance to the subvote 1, the general administration of the Department of Health. I ask the member to continue to the next question, please.

Mr. Collver: — Mr. Chairman, I certainly will. I hope that in terms of questioning the Minister of Health and in questioning the members opposite and questioning of the Assembly, the Attorney General suggests in his remarks just now to the point of order, and I am speaking now to his point of order, the Attorney General suggests that . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order! I have made the ruling. I ask you to continue with Item 1 of the Estimates of Health.

Mr. Collver: — I will do that very thing, Mr. Chairman. I would only say in conclusion of my remarks . . .

Mr. Chairman: — I ask you to continue . . . Order!

Mr. Collver: — I am going to conclude my remarks on Item 1. If the Chairman has ruled that the health of MLAs is not included in the expenditure of \$430 million . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order!

Mr. Collver: — Is that the ruling?

Mr. Chairman: — Yes, it is. I am asking you to continue with Item 1 and state your new question.

Mr. Collver: — Mr. Chairman, I think that the cheap politics played this afternoon in question period is unacceptable.

Mr. Chairman: — Order! I have made my ruling. I will recognize another member if they have another question. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

Mr. C.P. MacDonald (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I was merely going to make another suggestion to the member for Nipawin, put a question on the order paper and it can be fully debated.

Mr. G.N. Wipf (Prince Albert-Duck Lake): — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I would like to bring up a question which might be coming under Item 5, it is on home care

services . . . just give me a chance please. It might come under home care services but it includes the SAIL program, the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan, Regional Health and Social Services.

Mr. Chairman: — I ask the hon. member in order to expedite things if it is going to come up under another subvote and you can see that, fine, that is where I would like to carry it out. I think it would be more efficient and more beneficial to you. I think you realize that you have certainly the leeway to ask general questions under Item 1 but when you have checked through the Health estimates I think you can see where it would come up maybe better. I ask you to co-operate with the Chair and work it in that way. I think it will be better for all.

Mr. Wipf: — Mr. Chairman, I have checked it out and I believe it has to come up on Item 1 here. It is a simple question but it does concern so many areas. I will keep the question fairly general. Mr. Minister, the home care services program that was supposed to start in Prince Albert last April, the people in the health district up there were very concerned it was going to come under Social Services. I would like an answer from you, is this program going to be starting in Prince Albert? When it is going to be starting?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to inform the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake that there is already a program of home care in the city of Prince Albert, there has been for some time. The program for home care that was announced in the budget speech is the provincial home care program and although the two may ultimately relate to each other because of the major improvements to home care that will be provided through the provincial program, I guess the simple answer to the question is, there indeed is a home care program in Prince Albert now.

Mr. Wipf: — Yes, there is a Home Care Program, Mr. Minister, but maybe I didn't phrase my question right. It is the hiring of the nurses that they are concerned about up there. Will the nurses be hired and work under the Department of Social Services or under the Department of Health?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I think I have the question that the member asked. The nurses in the Prince Albert home care situation are now hired by the Prince Albert Home Care Organization; they are not hired by the provincial government in any way. The way that the funding will be provided to the provincial Home Care Program will be announced in due course when the Minister of Social Services announces it. I would suggest that the member will get that particular information at that time.

Mr. Wipf: — Then, Mr. Minister, one of the questions that is asked in here is that of Dr. Kinman and the Melfort-Tisdale Prince Albert Health Region, I think it's combined now. One of the disturbing questions that the had is as to which agency is to provide the nursing services. Are the nursing services of home care going to come under the Department of Social Services or the Department of Health?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I am not in a position to announce the provincial home care program, as I indicated to the member. When all the decisions are made and the announcement is made it will be done in due course and the member will then know the answer to this question.

Mr. Wipf: — One more question: This home care program, I realize that you said before that there are such services as Meals on Wheels and the other items which are there in place, they are in place now. According to the health region people this

program, this total program was supposed to be instituted a year ago, a year ago April, I believe it was. Can you give us any indication as to when this announcement will come or is it out of your hands and into the hands of Social Services? The health care part of it?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The government has already announced that the first phase will be introduced this year. The precise time, after it is fully developed, will be forthcoming in due course.

Mr. Wipf: — Mr. Minister, there will probably be a co-ordinating body set up between the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health in the health district, could you tell me if that will happen and who would be on this - I know you can't give me the names of who would be on it - from what professions would they be chosen?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — As has already been indicated, one of the reasons why the government has been working very hard in establishing a provincial Home Care Program is indeed so that there would be more co-ordination than there is now. When that decision is made it will also be announced in due course.

Mr. Wipf: — One last question on this then, Mr. Minister: I would just like to read to you a last couple of lines of this letter from the doctor. It says:

You will gather, sir, that we are very disturbed by the suggestion that provisions of nursing care should be taken away from the Department of Health and given to the Department of Social Services.

You say the announcement will come in due course. Can you indicate at this time whether the nursing care is going . . . is the Department of Health going to get rid of the nursing care and turn it over to the Department of Social Services or are you keeping the nursing care in there? Can I just add - one of the reasons for this is, as they state, in the communities where public nurses also are engaged in home nursing, one nurse would serve the homes with yet another nurse from another agency visiting such patients and no line of communication between the two would exist. They are afraid of the confusion that will exist.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I have already indicated to the member our government position in that we are concerned about assuring that there is a well co-ordinated program and indeed that is going to be the case when our program is announced, when it is developed. The member talks something about being disturbed by a suggestion. Obviously there have been people who have had a great deal of input into the development of the home care proposals that were led throughout the province by the hon. member, the Minister of Social Services. We believe that a program of that kind deserves a great deal of consideration by as many people who are interested in it as possible throughout the province. We have had that input. We have had a considerable amount of discussion. There have been different points of view, obviously, naturally there will always be. As a government we have been listening very closely to the expressions that have been made, to the comments that have been made on the paper that was presented for discussion purposes and those things will be seriously and are being seriously taken into consideration in the development of the program which the government will announce, hopefully in the very near future.

Mr. Wipf: — I just have one more concern then, Mr. Minister, and it is a concern that I was told about just last week and I want to give it to you and hope that it has been taken

care of or been looked at. It says here:

If the Department of Social Services were to hire the nurses, we are concerned that there would be no local nursing supervision and no local medical control. In our view the logical agency to administer and offer nursing services in the Regional Health Services Branch of the Department of Health.

Their concern is that it will be turned over to the Department of Social Services and they won't have the administration or the right people behind the regional health services.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I could thank the member for the information he has provided for me, Mr. Chairman. It is not information that is new. I have heard the concern. I have carefully reviewed all the correspondence and submissions that have been made to me. He only talks about, and rightfully so, of a concern as he calls it. As I said, just because there are some people who have a point of view it does not mean that the government has made a decision one way or the other. Indeed, it has not.

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Chairman, before we get off, it would appear that we are going to finalize Health estimates on Item 1, so it seems that every time we have a question we are going on to Item 1. But I don't think we should get off this one without getting right down to the nuts and bolts.

The member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake has come down to a very serious problem and that is the problem of duplication of services between the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services. I know as a former minister that I became very involved in it and it becomes a very clear requirement of the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services to sit down together and make a definition as to what is health, what is included in the definition of health and the responsibilities of the Department of Health in the province of Saskatchewan. The Department of Social Services likes to take the broad interpretation that the social needs of the patient are related to the mental health of the patient and, therefore, there should be a divided responsibility. We have a mass duplication of services in Saskatchewan which is costing the taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years and perhaps here is an opportunity where this duplication of services can be expanded and made worse by the introduction of a home care program in Saskatchewan if left under the Department of Social Services. I, of course, refer to the nursing homes. I know at the time that I was in the Department of Social Services there was a strong movement within that department to retain the nursing homes under the Department of Social Services because of what they considered the social needs of the patients particularly in level I and level II care.

I want to point out to the Minister of Health that it is time now that somebody became strong enough to actually determine where the responsibilities lie. What has happened or what the basic organization of structure of the Department of Health is in Saskatchewan is that it is divided into a regional basis. Therefore, there is the opportunity for regional supervision that is close to the basis of the service. This does not occur in the Department of Social Services. The vast majority of the supervision in the Department of Social Services is centralized in Regina or at the central level. The Department of Health should firmly establish that any home care, any nursing services provided in Saskatchewan should reside within the Department of Health to prevent a very costly duplication of services and the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake hit it on the head when he said, one nurse goes in one day and another nurse could go in the

next day, when perhaps if they were centralized under one regional health services, this would not occur. I know that co-ordination is a great and wonderful word but co-ordination in government, the very concept of departmentalization in government, is a direct repudiation of the word 'co-ordination'. It is very difficult to co-ordinate, very difficult to bring together and I would agree with the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake, it is now time that someone within the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services establish very clearly the definition of health, and place that responsibility where it belongs - under the Department of Health - and stop the costly duplication and the costly expenditure of taxpayers' money because of the duplication of services, because of that attempt to build empires within various departments of the government.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I certainly take the comments by the member as an expression of his feelings towards duplication and I want to again . . . as I have said, I have had some concern about duplication as has this government. We are more than aware of it and that is one of the reasons why we declared very clearly I thought, through the Minister of Social Services and myself on various occasions, that one of the purposes behind the development and the discussion throughout the province of Saskatchewan in order that everyone who wanted to could be heard in the development of this Home Care Program, was to make sure that there would not be a duplication.

Various options were described and comments were solicited. The three major approaches were: to use a district approach. (I hope the member doesn't discount that as a possibility); I think another one is a regional approach; the third one is a centralized approach. I have no hesitation in indicating that we have had, as this government, and we have tangible examples to show that we have had some concern about over-centralization. When you take the example of the revenue-sharing of this year in the Department of Municipal Affairs budget, or take the examples of other things we have done in de-centralizing offices and government personnel throughout the province that is going to be very paramount in the decision that we make in the establishment of the Home Care Program.

I also want to cite the member for his compliment on the Department of Health. I happen to agree with him. I think the Department of Health has some pretty outstanding management and has done an outstanding job. But simply because two programs or various aspects of service may be located in two separate departments does not necessarily mean that there has to be duplication. I have a pretty strong feeling that although you may have one or two or three departments working in a particular field, the fact of the matter is that they work for the same people of the province and are providing a service. The fact of the matter is that they are part of the same government and so that there can indeed be a co-ordination and in most cases, there is.

In conclusion let me just say that in the development of the proposals of the Home Care Program, both the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services have worked very closely in putting together the proposals for the government.

Mr. Birkbeck: — Mr. Chairman, I have just one question. In light of the Minister of health's response to my question in estimates as of March 30 and his reply, page 863 of the March 30 Hansard, in no uncertain terms, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of health agrees with me that the minimum charges per man, woman and child are in fact, \$457.89. He makes the argument again as he has many times before that health care costs in Ontario are \$528 and that is per family. His figure of \$457.89 is not far off of

that and that is for every man, woman and child. All I want to ask the minister is, would you not agree that in consideration of the fact that the taxpayers, whether they are paying it on alcohol or cigarettes or whether it's their taxable income or whatever - if you took those numbers of people you would see how I arrived at my figure of over \$1,300. Just take your figure and multiply it roughly by three and you will come out with \$1,374. As you can see by your reply to my questions in the estimates, it would question just how honorable you are, if you will just read your reply.

Would you agree, Mr. Minister, that those costs are far in excess of \$457.89?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that the member should read carefully, his question and read carefully, my reply. I outlined to him how he could calculate, on the basis of his question, what, if you take the number of Saskatchewan people and I only use rough figures, and I made it clear my calculation may have been out a little bit. He can ask his leader who seems to be pretty good with the figures and he would probably do a more precise job. I indicated that “expenditures” for health this year (and I underlined the word “expenditures”) were a certain amount of money - some \$400 million plus. If you took the population of Saskatchewan and you divided that population into those expenditures, you would come out roughly with the figure that I used, and I mentioned \$457.89, give or take some.

Now, if you want, you can do the same thing with the expenditures on the Department of Highways for the construction and the maintenance of a road or you could take the same kind of approach and you could calculate the expenditures of our educational system and you could divide the population into the amount of money allocated for education and you would get sort of the same kind of calculation. The member should keep in mind that he would have to utilize the funding that is raised locally through the local education mill rate, if he wanted to get even a more precise figure. So I do not think that anything I said was out of line when you take the kind of question that he has asked.

Now, to assume, as I have made it quite clear in my answer, that that \$457.89 was coming strictly out of the taxes of people, is dead wrong, Mr. Chairman. In fact, if the member would only pay attention to the kind of managerial approach that this government has taken, he will know that a very substantial portion of the expenditure of provincial funding on health or on education or on municipal roads or highways comes from other sources besides the direct taxpayer. It comes from the revenues in Saskatchewan, particularly from natural resources - something in the area of \$468 million, I said then and I say again, and I have no hesitation in restating it as often as I must, that one of the reasons we are able to do that and not have the deterrent fees is because of the policies we have on things like our natural resources.

Mr. Birkbeck: — Now, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to thank the Minister of Health for putting all those words on record and, of course, the words prior to that. That is all I have to say on Item 1 in Health.

Mr. Chairman: — Does everyone agree?

Mr. Katzman: — No. What percentage of the health expenditures in the province of Saskatchewan come by another route - not from the Government of Saskatchewan but through local taxpayers, the local mill rate and so forth?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I want to refer the member to page 11 of the department's 1976-1977 (the latest annual) report. He will find there, Table 1, which speaks of the

Department of Health expenditures on health services in Saskatchewan for various years and he will see it broken down according to financing by provincial government and federal government. We don't have at hand some of the financing that's done at the local level. I can assure the member that the vast amount of our funding that is provided is done through the province, is done through the Department of Health but indeed there are other revenues that come at the local level. There are the levies that union hospitals have to pick up certain expenditures. Sometimes there are deficits that they may be funding through the local levy. I don't have that here. I don't know whether we have that kind of an easily accessible record so I am telling you what I have at the present time. There is also, I understand, if I recollect correctly, and I could be corrected, a 50 cent levy that is provided for regional services at municipalities. There are these kinds of fundings which I referred to, the member for Rosthern might be interested, which I referred to in my earlier comments to the member for Souris-Cannington.

Mr. MacDonald: — How do the union hospitals levy a mill rate and what is the maximum mill rate did you say? How many union hospitals in Saskatchewan levy a mill rate, what is the maximum mill rate and how many hospitals does this serve?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I just want to double check this, the member asks a very specific question. He asks, how many hospital levy . . .

Mr. MacDonald: — Union hospital districts.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — That's right. The best information that my people have in their minds right now is that they indeed do have a levy. Now the average mill rate is somewhere over four mills. Now keep in mind what the purpose of that is. The funding of the capital of hospitals, union hospitals, is done on a cost share basis, provincial and local, so that some of that mill rate may indeed be and usually is, to pick up the local share of the capital part of a hospital. There is also some levy that some union hospital districts have, not all but some, for the purposes of operating. That happens as the member knows can happen in school boards. As a former teacher, where if a school, in this case if the hospital, wishes to operate a program richer than the program that is insured through the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan, it is free to do that. That's part of local autonomy and I think it's important to guarantee that exists. They are free to do that and in some cases might apply a mill or whatever in order to enrich the service that they have because they think in their particular area they want to have it.

Mr. MacDonald: — Just one comment now we are on this, Mr. Minister. I think we better comment on that. What you are really saying is that certain union hospital districts in the province of Saskatchewan charge a deterrent. The deterrent fee is tacked on to the mill rate and don't suggest that it's all for capital cost because you and I both know that the vast majority of the mill rates or the hospital levies are for operating costs - 99 per cent my colleague says from Assiniboia-Gravelbourg - I'm not sure if it's 99 per cent but a very small portion of it is for capital costs. The vast majority of all hospital levies or mill rates that are now assessed by hospital boards or union hospital districts in Saskatchewan are for operating costs and have been for many, many years. What it is, of course, is the fact that the Department of Public Health when they cut back services deliberately to their recognized hospital expenditures, which they approve in a budget, and if a hospital district wants to have an increase, if they want to maintain the level of service that they have in the past, they turn around and they must, of course, apply a mill rate levy. I want to say that there is more than one way of charging a deterrent fee in Saskatchewan or in Canada. There is more than one way of passing on a

direct cost and, of course, one of the most insidious ways, of course, is through the property taxes because property taxes are a very, very unfair method of taxation. Very rarely is it related to income. All I am pointing out once again is that if you are going to have free hospital care in the province of Saskatchewan then don't turn around and tax the property owner to help defray the costs, whereas many other citizens in Saskatchewan don't pay any mill rate, they don't pay any property tax, they don't make any direct contribution to health costs. To me it seems to be rather discriminatory for you to tack on a - not that I disagree with local citizens in Saskatchewan making a personal contribution to health care - but I am merely saying by suggesting that this is free is a fallacious statement and a fallacious argument because the mill rate is an insidious way of collecting a deterrent fee and there is just no way that you can deny it.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I guess I have to explain to the member what a deterrent fee is, Mr. Chairman. Obviously he has forgotten because he has been out of government since 1971 when they had one.

This is not a deterrent fee. First of all let me clarify this. This is not a deterrent fee. A deterrent fee is when you have a direct charge on you when you receive service. That is what a deterrent fee is. As some people describe it and some people want it there because they claim, as the Liberals did - they had their reasons for doing it, I am not going to argue with their reasons. I am only going to say I think they were wrong - they argued that that was going to make people more responsible, that is the purpose of a deterrent fee.

Let me read from the annual report on The Union Hospital Act, page 16 where it says:

Once the hospital district has been established, the act enables the hospital board to either build and maintain a new hospital, purchase and lease or take over by other means an existing hospital and maintain the operation of it or make grants to hospitals without owning it in order to enable it to maintain a high standard of hospital care.

Now, surely the member would not suggest, because if he does I will not accept it, that the government should take over the operations of all of our hospitals in Saskatchewan. I don't think he is suggesting that, so I want to clarify it for him because by sort of insinuation or assumption somebody else may conclude it from the things he said. Surely a union hospital district should have the right, because of the things that I mention because of some renovation or expansion program it may have in mind or because of some enriched services that it might want to provide. That is why it is there and, in fact, they do it. The member says that some hospitals, some people in the province are treated not the same because they do not have to pay such a mill rate. Once again he is wrong. Unfortunately, I think, he must have forgotten, Mr. Chairman, that in the legislation of the province of Saskatchewan in the Department of Health there is something called The Hospital Revenue Act 1966 which collects a proportion of taxation from areas in which there are no union hospital districts and then it's allocated according to utilization of various hospitals.

I just want to conclude by saying that I think the right of union hospital districts to be able to establish a mill rate in conjunction with the municipalities which are part of the union district is a right that we should protect. It has nothing to do with the standard of services that is provided through insurance by the province because that standard is as good as it has ever been in Saskatchewan and indeed because of some extended

services by new programs, which unfortunately sometimes some people consider there to be frills, we have been able to improve some of the services of Saskatchewan people.

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Chairman, just one comment. I want to disagree with his definition of 'deterrent'. What he is really saying, that a deterrent fee is a direct charge on the individual for the service provided, like Pharmacare, the pharmaceutical charge for prescription drugs. But I want to say there is a basic difference. All the difference of the NDP is it is a direct charge on the individual for service, the other is a direct charge to the community for service. Whether you like to say it or not, people are paying a deterrent fee in the community.

I also want to say that some people are paying this deterrent fee and others are not, because it is on the mill rate and on property. Those who do not own property do not pay that mill rate and, therefore, that's all I am going to suggest. Mr. Chairman, I don't have any other comments on this. It is a deterrent fee, the minister is aware of it, like we all are.

Mr. R. Katzman (Rosthern): — It is interesting to note the minister's statement to the other hon. member. When you receive a service that's what you pay a deterrent fee for and I guess he is finally admitting that Pharmacare has a deterrent fee which everybody in this House has been saying for a long time. I am glad he put it on the record finally.

I would like to ask a question on the general health. If a person, where it is indicated had an emergency operation or an operation outside of Canada or outside of Saskatchewan, the rate in your third column - Benefits Effective April 1, 1978 - payments up to the average rate per day in Regina and Saskatoon, could you put a figure on that, as of today, for me?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The average cost, I am informed, of the emergency, is about \$135 per day. Also I want to point out to the member (and I know he will have a follow-up question on that), he mentioned something about the Saskatchewan Prescription Drug Plan although he called it Pharmacare Plan, obviously he's got the Manitoba Conservative proposal in his mind which they would like to implement. I want to tell him again that his party's proposal would charge people \$50 flat first of all before they could get any help at all, even if they were old people simply living on pension and that his party would then charge 20 per cent of the price of every drug that that person got after that.

Now, we as a concept and we make no apology for it, (we were honestly making a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan), and said, we will provide a program like the Saskatchewan Prescription Drug Plan, we will provide a program like the Saskatchewan Hearing Aid Plan at greatly reduced costs. We have delivered on that commitment and we are proud of it because we believe it is an effective program in which everybody in the province is able to benefit from, but if the member wants to have a follow-up question on his question, then I want to again restate for him that the average cost roughly is about \$135 a day for emergency treatment.

Mr. Katzman: — Under the old system I gather then it was \$85 per day, as is indicated on this flier and I have a problem . . . could I have a page please . . . I will send you over a photostatic copy of a problem I am working on which relates to all this, with all the documentation so that you know what I am referring to. The problem exists and I have the permission of the people who have written the letter to table it if it is necessary to

table it in the House. If not, it is just for the minister's knowledge so that we can solve the problem.

The problem exists in this particular case of a person being outside of Canada and being told exactly the opposite from what this brochure says. They are informed 85 per cent, not \$85 and the interesting thing is if you check through the bills you will discover that the government paid on 30 per cent, not on \$30. The bill conflicts with what the information says. I wonder if you can explain why. I think the fourth line in the written letter will give you approximately 30 per cent will be paid - what has happened at this time, yet the 85 doesn't work in. It doesn't all balance with what your flyer said.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, I am at some difficulty and so would be my officials in really resolving an individual personal problem before the consideration of the Committee of Finance. I noticed that the latest letter on the material the member has provided for me, the date is January 9, 1978. It seems to me if the problem has been that great, and I don't doubt that it has, the member should have brought it to my attention a long time ago, so we could have followed up with this person who is obviously having the difficulties.

I can give the member a commitment that I will ask Mr. Reid to take this and we will work it through the system and then we will provide him the answers as they apply particularly in this specific case, which is something I really don't think we can do in this committee.

Mr. Katzman: — The only reason I gave you this item was strictly the point of confusion. The people are being told 85 per cent, it seems, and 30 per cent when your figure shows \$85 and \$30 and the payments don't jibe with what your brochure says. I am asking you to check that particular point.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Maybe this will help the member. I am not going to argue, I just want to point out that if you look at this letter, which I passed out to every member so that he would know, we have three columns and the new one was applicable effective April 1, 1978, O.K. I don't know whether that is a point or not, but there you are.

Item 1 agreed.

Item 2

Mr. Katzman: — The minister must be a little relieved. He is finally off Item 1. On the tuberculosis, I asked several questions earlier. You said you would like to handle them under Item 2 - re the negotiations of where you are going to place the people that were at the sanitarium. Could you answer them now or do you want me to rephrase them?

You have closed the sanitarium in Saskatoon, which was the last sanitarium of TB beds. Are you negotiating with a specific hospital where these patients will go? Will there be an isolation or what are you going to do?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — In answer to the question, the discussions are taking place and they will apply to several hospitals not just one particular hospital. When we have had all those sorts of discussions with the various hospitals, we will be able to give you a pretty firm indication of where the patient is being treated.

I just want to sort of emphasize that what we are doing in this move is that we are totally

ensuring TB treatment through the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan. That is what we are doing, which has not been the case before because payment has had to come from other sources such as the local levy and so on. That is one of the motivations behind our move. One obviously is to totally ensure it. Another one is that we are now in a stage where we can better deliver it through the hospitals rather than having a separate institution as we have had now. So the building isn't closing and the member knows that but we are moving the method of treatment.

Mr. Katzman: — Just one more point on the method. I hope you will be arranging that these people will be able to stay near their family. I am hoping that wherever you locate them, as may have to happen, that location to their family and their home and their friends will be one of the prime considerations.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Indeed, it will be one of the very prime considerations.

Item 2 agreed.

Item 3

Mr. Katzman: — One of my pet ideas and I know the department, I think, has looked into it this year with the assistance of government services, is the proposal of using helicopters on the air ambulance service. Could you give me some information on what your study proved - it was too expensive for the time element, it was not sufficient, or what?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — We are certainly cognizant of the things the member talks about. I have talked about it, by the way, to health people myself - including the medical profession and hospital people. We now have an arrangement where the Department of Northern Saskatchewan has on the contractual arrangement, a helicopter service. We have an arrangement through the Department of Northern Saskatchewan to be able to utilize the same helicopter service in certain times, when required or when the helicopter is available; so we have indeed been moving in the direction of trying to expand the service to include some helicopter capability.

Mr. Katzman: — With that particular point in mind are you suggesting that in the off season and in fire season when these are all used up there, it is possibly in the winter? Is it just for the transfer or are you suggesting in the winter, for example, when the helicopters have hours - when the government gets a helicopter contract, the contract is for so many hours, and of course if they are not all used up in DNS, then I assume we are going to try to use some of those hours. Therefore there will be no cost shown because it will be covered under DNS budget, is that correct?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The question of cost is something that is going to have to be worked out between the three departments involved which are the Department of Health, Department of Northern Saskatchewan and the Department of Government Services, and those arrangements will be looked after.

Mr. Katzman: — The third question to this then is what happens, for example, if you decide to use a helicopter, in some instances the only way out for a patient? Would you be coming down to a Prince Albert hospital? Who would be responsible for the heliport or whatever the proper name for it is, so that they can land near the hospital?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — One of the benefits of using a helicopter in some cases is that you can pretty well land almost anywhere, so the heliport will be determined by whatever kind of landing area is available. It could be a roadside in some cases. I do not know how much specific I could give you an answer than that.

Mr. Katzman: — The concern I was thinking about is you are not planning to spend money to build a proper landing pad?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — No we are not, certainly at this point in time.

Mr. Wipf: — Some questions, Mr. Chairman, on the air ambulance service. You have cut back \$7,000 in the air ambulance service and as I understand in your questions, this is possibly because some of the other departments like the DNS, I think you mentioned are taking on some of the responsibility and providing air ambulance service. Am I correct in that?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — No, not really. The member will know that in the province there has been, over the years, a considerable improvement in such things as roads and accessibility by road. There is a provincial ambulance program funding arrangement that is being made which we are quite convinced will provide a very much improved ambulance service. We are also convinced it will provide an improved ambulance service at reduced cost. The reason why the estimate in the book here is reduced is because we anticipate that, because of those things, there will be less ambulance patients in the forthcoming year than there have been in the past and there are certain trends that would indicate that to be a pretty good estimate.

Mr. Wipf: — This \$191,700 - what is it used for? Is it just for the maintenance of the aircraft, the wages of the pilot and the gas? Just how is that broken down?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The Central Vehicle Agency operates the aircraft. The pilots are employed in that service and what they do is charge the Department of Health for the services that are provided. That is what this is, a charge.

Mr. Wipf: — Mr. Minister, have you any data to inform us of how many trips you did make last year with your air ambulance service? Last year and the year before you have seen this drop in services that are going to be supplied by air ambulance . . .

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I could refer the member to page 14 of the annual report of the Department of Health in the province and he would find the information there with all the explanations and a chart that gives the utilization for 1975-1979 Regina base 105, Saskatoon base 114. For 19976-1977 Regina base 58, Saskatoon base 389.

Mr. Wipf: — Minister, one of the Saskatoon bases is much higher. I take it there that it handles most of your air ambulance services from the North then, is that . . .

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Partly true, not totally true. You will keep in mind that Saskatoon location is more central to the province, the widest portion of the more densely part of the province and so that too is a factor but certainly the services to the North would have some determination of the fact that there is a large number of trips out of the Saskatoon base.

Mr. Wipf: — Department of Health, you mentioned you are going into some programming of supplying better ambulance services and I'm thinking of the northwest

part of our province where yesterday or Friday, whatever it was, when I asked the minister or the Premier about \$160,000 worth of taxi fares in the DNS and he said that the major portion of this \$160,000 was for transporting sick people or ill people out of the northwest area of the province to the hospitals. I was just wondering, is it the policy to use a taxi service because it is probably cheaper than air ambulance service or is there a shift in policies to go to taxis or to use taxis as ambulances rather than air ambulance or the ground ambulance here?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — No, not necessarily. It's not the policy, there are cases where there is a certain particular time that is the only vehicle or kind of service that is available. In most of the cases, if not all of the cases that the member may be talking about, I'm not that familiar with it, he would find that the utilization was through the Department of Social Services, not the Department of Health, because they may be the people utilizing it would be Social Services clients. I'm not in the position to be able to argue the efficiency of one or the other, but I've given you the answer on the utilization and I'm saying it's not policy of the Department of Health to utilize but indeed there may be circumstances where there is nothing else available and they require the services of a taxi in order to get the person to a hospital or a doctor quickly when the need is there.

Mr. Katzman: — One other question. Last summer I believe, you were lacking one of your air ambulance aircraft because it was on fire patrol. If so, is that the reason why you just had a Saskatoon base and you closed the Regina one because the aircraft was loaned to fire control in DNS?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The services of the aircraft, I think, and the availability of aircraft is something that you should ask under the department responsible. I can assure the member though, that in the experiences we have had we have never had a lack of service when there was need it was there and it was always delivered.

Mr. Katzman: — I won't argue it but I understand that even occasionally the executive aircraft was used for an air ambulance trip, I understand, but my question is if figures are so different, what was the Saskatoon figure versus the Regina figure and I'm wondering if that's because Saskatoon was where you flew out of while the Regina aircraft was on DNS work.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I just explained a minute ago why the figures are different. They're different because of the Saskatoon location being more central to the province and also because it is out of the Saskatoon location, although not totally, but predominantly that the services to the North are provided.

Item 3 agreed.

Item 4 agreed.

Item 5

Mr. MacDonald: — Just a brief question. Mr. Minister, this is the question of duplication that I was talking about here under the Department of Health estimates you have almost \$2 million, \$1,781,000 for Home Care Program and now you're talking about establishing a new home care program. Can the minister tell me two things? First of all is this for the small regional health regions where they have experimental programs, I noticed you have 17 people there, what is the purpose of that \$2 million or \$1.7 million? Is it the intention of the Department of Health to withdraw that \$2 million,

abolish that program and turn it into the new Home Care Program, when it is established, or is it intending to retain that, if it goes under the Department of Social Services?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The appropriation here as it has been for some time, as long as this has existed, is to provide funding, including the necessary increases because of the increased cost and so on for the 19 home care programs that are administered or funded by the Department of Health at the present time. So it's only a continuation of what is now taking place and is a practice when the government determines the full package of the home care program which we talked about a little while ago we will then determine what we will be doing. At this point of time we have not yet made that determination. I can once again though reiterate what I said that one of the very major thrusts that we will be making in the development of the new program, and you will find that in this explanation, is to provide a better co-ordination that we have had in the past.

Mr. MacDonald: — I have a comment to make. This is the very problem that we're talking about. Here we have a program located in the Department of Health for \$1.78 million and the Department of Social Services goes on a big study for a Home Care Program. Either it is located in the Department of Health or it's located in the Department of Social Services and if you're going to locate it in the Department of Social Services it should be abolished from the Department of Health budget completely so that there is some definite line of authority and some definite area of responsibility. If it's going to be located in the Department of Health then the Department of Social Services should keep their fingers out of the pie and this is the problem that I bring up to you. \$1.7 million for home care program in the Department of Health which is one big pile of money, of the taxpayers' money, quite a substantial portion of anybody's budget including the Department of Health and yet we have the Department of Social Services investigating a Home Care Program. And this is the thing that people bring up, for example the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake, a letter written to the Minister of Social Services from the doctor who is the medical health officer, indicating the concern about all of a sudden the Department of Social Services getting into the Home Care Program when the Department of Health has already got them established in certain regions, they are doing a credible job, they have nurses going to visit, home care and so forth, and I know that everybody is going to get in and say we each have our own little role. But I am saying gain, this is the problem of duplication of services, and I think the minister should give me and the House the assurance that if the new Home Care Program is established under the Social Services, this will be abolished or vice versa, and we will have a definite chain of command.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, perhaps the House should keep in mind and the member in particular, that until the new Home Care Program is firmly established, surely we need to guarantee the funding and the services that were provided in the past to these 19 Home Care Programs ought to be here. That is why the subvote is here and that is why the funding is here. When? In order to assure the member and give him the assurance that he asks, when the Home Care Program that we have been developing provincially has been established, I can assure the member that the funding then and the co-ordination will be in one source. The study was done by the Government of Saskatchewan through the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health, because there are two aspects to home care. There is a broader aspect than the two aspects of home care; the Department of Social Services you will know, indeed has been providing certain funding to local organizations to provide certain components of home care - so has the Department of Health. We have said as a government (and we are going to do it), that it is time we began to develop a better co-ordinated system of

providing this kind of service. That is what we are about to do, and we want to involve all the people who have an interest in this at the local level, as well as all the people who have an interest at the provincial levels and we can have a better program that can adjust itself to the needs of local communities. I am persuaded that the one that is going to be forthcoming will do that.

Mr. Wipf: — You have stated you have 19 home care programs in the province here under this budget - that gives each home care program about \$900,000. You will be developing some more home care programs in other areas I understand you to say. Will the same type of allotment be made to the new ones (about \$900,000) . . . 90,000? . . . that's about the same amount of profit you made in the potash mine isn't it?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Chairman, the new method of financing is something again that will be announced with the new Home Care Program and as I can't give you details of that home care program, I can't give you the details of the new financing. I can tell the member, I'm sure quite safely, that the amount of funding for home care in the new program will not only be adequate, it will be considerably more than the money which we have been providing for home care in the past.

Item 5 agreed.

Item 6

Mr. Wipf: — I have one or two little questions here, Mr. Chairman. These other expenses here of \$1.5 million roughly. I realize it will take a little while but would you be able to give us those breakdowns at a later date rather than ask you for each one right now. Or if you have them here today (you should have them here today), maybe you can just read them out.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I have a whole page of information but I don't have it in the form that you ask. I can give you the amount of increases and so on but I will get my people to put it together and break it down for you and will give it to you on paper so that you will have it, O.K.?

Item 6 agreed.

Item 7

Mr. MacDonald: — Is this your per capita grant?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — No, it's a little broader than that, although that is the major component. The subvote here is Grants in assistance of City Health Departments and other health agencies. It provides grant assistance to the city of Regina and Saskatoon to provide health services and it also provides grant assistance to other organizations for health care such as the St. John's Ambulance Association, the Saskatchewan Association for Retarded Children and so on. If you want I can give you all of them.

Mr. MacDonald: — Where is the cutback?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The figure there can be misleading. There has not been a cutback. The reason why the figure is smaller is because there has been a transfer of some of the funding that once was done here to other subvotes, for example, subvote 31 is a new subvote, the funding that was provided for grants in assistance of clinical

services which is a pretty significant item. The transfer to that subvote does not only come from here but also comes from Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan. We can talk about that one there. There is no cutback, it is strictly simply because there is a transfer of some of the funding to another place.

Mr. Katzman: — Could you explain, is this where the new Saskatoon Rural Health Region comes from? Or does that come under the other one?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — No, I am informed that that would have been under the previous subvote, but if you have a question, that's fine. I think we can probably . . .

Mr. Katzman: — Okay, I apologize. I thought it was. The Saskatoon area is trying a new experiment the way I understand it, which is the health region where a lot of the local communities rurally as well as the city are all going together to provide a health service of equal standard. Now, what is happening with the employees of the Government of Saskatchewan who have been transferred to this new jurisdiction?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Nothing has happened with regard to the employees but I can't tell the member what might happen because the negotiations have not been completed. Last week, I understand that the non-Saskatoon municipalities had a meeting. They had it at my request to discuss this. They have considered it and the city of Saskatoon, to the best of my knowledge, has not had the final proposal to their council and a decision of the council so it is still in a position of decision making. That's where it is at now. I have not yet made a decision as to what we will be doing at this particular time until I have had a response and have a chance to further meet the people involved.

Mr. Katzman: — Earlier in the year I understood that there was a board to be set up representative of the city of Saskatoon, representatives from the small towns that are involved and the provincial government and your department was refusing to appoint its two members, basically saying we will give you X amount of dollars but we have no responsibility for what your decisions are. Is that still your department's belief?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — There is a provisional board now for the purpose of negotiations and discussions that the municipalities have undertaken. I indicated then that I did not think I should be appointing members from the provincial government because that is a decision that they have to decide at the local level. We've been prepared all the time to assist and had Mr. Adams who has had an opportunity and who has been in constant dialogue with these people who are carrying out these discussions. In order to have a board established other than the provisional board, it would necessitate legislation. There is no legislation at the present time and we have not made any final decisions although I have assured the people concerned that I have to make those decisions very soon now because I think they have arrived at a situation where they can indicate to us where they stand pretty firmly. I will be doing that as soon as we are able to have the follow-up.

Mr. Katzman: — What you are saying is you are discussing this with the provisional board. At this time you have not appointed to, as they have asked you to do on the provisional board, or is that for the other board that they are asking for two?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — . . . withdrawn that request. The rural areas after that withdrawal have been discussing the possibilities of my appointing or the government appointing one representative, but we have had no indication on that yet. But that

original request was withdrawn.

Mr. Katzman: — Is the concept still then a two-year or three-year experiment to make sure the thing will work and then possibly it will be developed in other areas, or it won't be. The second portion of my question is, if the experiment should be some strange . . . I don't think it is going to fail, but if for some reason it should fail, is there a way that they divide back and no employee (like the government employees) will come back to theirs and the city will go back to theirs?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The proposal that the municipalities involved have been discussing is a three-year opting out kind of a thing. If it should not succeed in the way that the members had visualized it, then indeed it would revert back to the present system. Once again, that only is if indeed the whole thing comes together.

As I said, we are seriously looking at it. I happen to have some views about it. I think that there may be some worthwhile merits in the thing but no decision has at this point in time been made at my level or at the government level.

Mr. Katzman: — Well, I must agree with the minister on his last statement that there is a worthwhile aspect, that there are some aspects that may be harmful. But of course as in all things, they must look at the total picture for the benefit of those in Saskatoon and the rural area receiving service.

The final question on this becomes, how much or what per cent of the service does your government plan to pay - give a grant for or pay for? I understand the service will be an upgrading of service rurally and a continuing of the same level of service in the city.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — We would provide 100 per cent of the cost of the basic services in the rural area and over the three-year period we would be increasing the contribution that we would be providing to the city of Saskatoon in order that it could upgrade the services that it provides. That is not exactly accurate - upgrade the services that the whole region would then provide.

Item 7 agreed.

Item 8

Mr. Katzman: — Could the member explain why the other expenses in this item are up so much?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I'm told that the cost of vaccines has gone up almost 100 per cent and that is the basic reason why there is such a substantial increase. It is an increase over which we have no control, unfortunately.

Mr. Katzman: — Which vaccines are you issuing? Could you give us maybe five or six different ones?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I have a hole through my paper so I can not read all of the words that well, but for things like diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, oral polio, measles, rubella and things of that nature.

Mr. Katzman: — These will be the ones given at the health region, not at the hospital,

when you refer to tetanus and so forth?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Yes.

Item 8 agreed.

Item 9

Mr. Wipf: — One question on this, Mr. Minister. There's a cutback in this. Is this just because you have a cutback of one individual in your staffing for this year?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The reduction that you see there is because of a reduction in new equipment and repairs required in 1978-79 and in addition the chief audiologist position has been deleted.

Mr. Wipf: — Then your main cutback there is in the other expenses of \$11,000 and that's just what you referred to there on the equipment, is that right?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — That's equipment.

Mr. Wipf: — Can you tell us where you get your hearing aids from, where are they brought in from?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The major suppliers are Unicon, which is a Canadian manufacturer, uniton, Unitron. Try three times and you get it right. Unitron, Canadian manufacturer, that is the major supplier and also a Saskatchewan supplier is Oticon, which is a Canadian distributor and a Denmark manufacturer.

Mr. Wipf: — Mr. Minister, in this program is there any attempt being made at the present time to have the manufacturer of these hearing aids being brought into Saskatchewan and have them made locally instead of brought in from . . .

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Yes, we have made some exploration in respect to that area. We had SED Industries, which is a subsidiary of the University of Saskatchewan, take a look at it and they indicated that in their view there would not be enough volume for them to be able to do it and that's where the situation is at the present time.

Mr. Wipf: — What people do we have in the hearing aid plan that are receiving the services of the Saskatchewan Hearing Aid Plan, last year and the year under review right now? Has it gone up significantly?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The annual report, Saskatchewan Hearing Aid Plan, page 2, highlights for the 1976-77 year indicates that there were 8,160 beneficiaries who received services from the Saskatchewan Hearing Aid Plan. Just as a point of interest and I'm sure that won't surprise anybody, of these 53.7 per cent were 65 years of age or over. I think that's perfectly understandable.

Mr. R.A. Larter: — Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister what percentage of these if any are supplied to the SAIL program? Do they handle these from the SAIL program as well?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — It is a separate program and has nothing to do with the SAIL program.

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Item 9 agreed.

Item 10

Mr. Katzman: — Other personal services and other expenses are up rather drastically. Could you explain why?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The increases under other personal services include an additional two dental nurses; an additional two certified dental assistants in Regina, additional three dental nurses and two certified dental assistants in Saskatoon, two dental nurses and two certified assistants in Yorkton; one dental nurse and one assistant in Prince Albert; one dental nurse and one assistant in North Battleford. There is provision for casual, clerical and dental nurse assistants during vacations and during sickness and so on.

Mr. Katzman: — Why wouldn't you list these then under permanent positions? Are you suggesting that you are hiding personnel again?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Sorry, maybe I misunderstood the question. Was your question under other expenses?

Mr. Katzman: — Other personnel services is up from 83 to 192.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Sorry. I forgot to point out the people I referred to were temporary and casual positions which is listed under other personnel services. There is another area for the permanent services.

Mr. Katzman: — Well, how many people are under this particular vote and what is the duration of time that they are employed before they become what you would call permanent employees?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The total establishment personnel is, April 1, 1977, 376 approved, assuming we are going to approve this budget; April 1, 1978, 386.

Mr. Katzman: — But you just finished telling me that the temporaries of 17 basically you gave me and I assume there are many more, that's what you are telling me the increased amount of money is there for - \$192,860. You are telling me that is for temporary positions? If that is the case, how many temporary positions, what defines them as temporary and why are they not defined as permanent if you are going to be keeping them?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — First of all we break it down in two components because all the people that we are going to need or will need to employ on a permanent basis are listed under permanent positions. The member should not assume that appropriations for positions on the casual or temporary basis should automatically mean that they are going to become a permanent position. There are certain periods of time when there needs to be additional work done and therefore the need for additional personnel and that's why that provision is made. That is not permanent.

Mr. Katzman: — Well the reason I am asking, as you know I worked for a civic government and under this exact area. I have known what is called a casual employee and a temporary employee who just spent 35 years on the payroll, classified as a casual

and a temporary, and I am asking you, is there any point where a casual becomes a permanent, like after two years of that job existing, is it a permanent job or could he run forever as a casual?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I will give you some information on that. Once again, for the policy on employment in government, I think you should be asking in the estimates of the Public Service Commission where that policy is established and where it is administered. For an example though, if you take a casual position I believe that the policy is (and I stand to be corrected) although I don't think I will be that far out, that no one can serve in a casual position longer than for a period of 26 days in any two months. But I may be corrected by the Minister of the Public Service Commission if you would ask him that question during his estimates.

Mr. Katzman: — What about part-time people, what is the rule on them?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Once again that is difficult to answer because part-time is a separate classification of staff altogether and depending on the job the person could work for a half a day, a person could work for one or two hours and depending on the circumstances, that would determine the amount of time that a part-time employee works.

Mr. J.G. Lane (Qu'Appelle): — I have some questions on the dental program. I can remember a couple of years ago, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister where we had quite a lengthy debate and the hon. member for Regina Victoria and the hon. member for Cutknife-Lloydminster participated most vigorously and that was on the matter of fluoridation. Now the Assembly at that time passed a motion with regard to the government's participation in any fluoridation program and I think the sense of the House at that time, if I recall, was that the government shouldn't be continuing and yet I notice page 15 of the dental program's annual report that the dental staff promote wherever possible the importance of fluoridation of community water supplies practical and effective health measure for safely and economically reducing the incidence of dental decay. Now on the one hand there is a significant segment of the members that have argued more strongly against fluoridation and here you've now committed yourself to promoting fluoridation. I would like to know what activities the dental program and the dental staff are taking to promote fluoridation in community water supplies.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — On request the Department of Health official regional Saskatchewan Dental Plan people will do things such as attend home and school meetings where it is requested and provide information on research that has been done and information that's been available. The member should not confuse the debate that took place under certain amendments to legislation which would have changed certain requirements to be met before fluoridation could be put into a community by a community, with the issue of what kind of information is available on the question of fluoridation. Dental plan people provide that information, they do go to home and school meetings, they do provide counselling to parents who are in the dental plan program and I think that they have an obligation to do that.

Mr. Lane (Qu'Ap): — It's obvious from the annual report in your statement that it is your departmental policy or belief that fluoridation of community water supplies will in fact reduce the incidence of dental decay. Now what studies has the department to prove that particular position and confirm for me that this is the position of the Department of Health?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — We are not in the process of doing any inquiries or any research. There has been a considerable amount of research done internationally; in this country, you can consider it internationally, there are volumes of it which provide all the information that is necessary. I can tell the member that from that scientific research there is every indication that there is a reduction in dental cavities of 60 per cent among children who have had access to water that has been fluoridated. So there is substantial proof for the position which I happen to personally take in which I think, as the department does, that there is some considerable merit.

Mr. Lane (Qu'Ap): — The department is of the opinion that fluoridation of community water supplies is an advantageous or a beneficial practice?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The department is able to provide the research data that exists because of all the research that has been done, to communities who then decide for themselves whether they want to provide fluoridated water. The people in that community, as has been the case in several communities throughout Saskatchewan, basically will make that decision.

Mr. Lane (Qu'Ap): — Well, you are rather cowardly in your approach then. Will you not admit that in most other areas if you have a belief in a position that you believe that some beneficial results will come about because of a program or an approach. But when it comes to fluoridation you don't have the courage of your convictions. I wonder why the minister has this rather inconsistent approach to some of the health policies of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I am very interested that we are learning things about the Conservative Party in the estimates debate about their position on health premiums, about their position on community clinics where the member for Nipawin, alleged the other day, that community clinic doctors are paid over \$100,000 a piece of blatant piece of misinformation. Now, the member for the Conservative Party from the constituency of Lumsden has clearly indicated, in this House, that the Conservative Party would, in a compulsory way, require that water be fluoridated in the province of Saskatchewan. We are not prepared to do that. We never have been prepared to do that. People in the professional health field have the information that will substantiate their position. The Department of Health does it.

We provide, within the legislation, opportunity for communities to have vote on whether they want to provide fluoridation. That is a decision under our system of local autonomy, which we have not only a government promoted, but which we, as a government, have dramatically increased, way beyond what it used to be under a former Liberal government, way beyond what it is in Conservative governments throughout Canada. We give them the right to make those decisions.

Mr. Lane (Qu'Ap): — You have proved the ignorance of your own policies, in many cases, during the week's debate and I don't think it incumbent upon you to speak for anybody else.

I suggest to the hon. minister that in fact you are very selective in your approach and that the political consideration as to what may be popular or unpopular, have a pretty, or are of a heavy consideration in your determination of health programs and health policies. That is a point that has been made, I think, in the past in this debate and this is just one more example of that departmental position.

Mr. Katzman: — Getting back to the question I was at earlier about these part-time and casual. We see approximately a move from 83 to 192, the figure. How does it break down into wages? The different figure?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The portion under that \$192,860 for salaries, is \$117,600, for the positions which I outlined that were the professional positions and \$15,430, which was the clerical and dental nurse assistants because of sickness and this sort of thing.

Mr. Katzman: — Of that funds, \$117,600 are for casual or part-time employees or temporary?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — \$15,430 was for casual.

Mr. Katzman: — Just a minute, back up now, casual was \$15,430 and the \$117,000 is for part-timers?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — \$117,600 is for temporary, \$15,430 is for casual.

Mr. Katzman: — Now, temporary is how long?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Up to a year.

Mr. Katzman: — One year of continuous employment and if you still have that job available that person cannot stay in it; is that what you are saying?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — That's right.

Mr. Katzman: — How many temporary positions would there be?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — It is 166 man months. You don't necessarily apply it on the basis of numbers of people or positions; it is 166 man months.

Mr. Katzman: — Okay it is 166 man months and anybody that spends, after spending one year in what you call a temporary, you either have to let the person go whom you spent time training in your system or move them into a new position as another temporary somewhere else. You can't keep them in the same temporary position, is that correct?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Temporary positions, as I have indicated, can go up to a period of a year. If then the department should feel that there is a need for a continuation of that position the department then has to go and get it approved through the Public Service Commission, the Treasury Board.

Mr. Katzman: — Approved as a permanent position or approved as what?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — As a permanent position.

Mr. Katzman: — What you are saying then is that after one year, if that person is still on staff and the position is still required, you turn around and go to the Public Service Commission and say, we need an additional person on this job because such and such, would you approve it, and then would you bulletin that position or would a person that has been there for a year automatically get it?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — No, it is not automatic. In the Government of Saskatchewan the merit system applies and that person would apply for the job as everybody else in the establishment.

Mr. Katzman: — So let's assume that of this 166 man months there are ten people who have remained there for a full year. Would you go for a full year. Would you go for ten positions, one position and the person who is most capable would get it or how would you handle it?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The request that would be made would be dependent upon whatever the need of the program might be. There may not be a request for making those positions permanent because the need may not be there. If the need was there, it would determine the request.

Mr. Katzman: — Well, I'm concerned in other areas of employment, the government has always accused the private sector of having what you call, if I remember correctly in the Bayda inquiry, they called them 59 day workers, I think was the figure they used, people that worked just so long as a casual then you have to be laid off and then you can come back again. How many times will the employee be classed as temporary, come back into a different slot with a break period of say 10 days or less or 20 days or less to this man month set up?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — The position of this government and the position and policy of the Public Service Commission that temporary positions are not to be used where there is a clear need for a continuing job. If there is a clear need for a continuing job any department has to request it and has to justify it and then the Treasury Board and the Public Service Commission would either approve or not approve depending on whether it was considered to be a request that should be approved or not. So the member should not make comments or insinuations about what the policy of the government is. I'm telling him that the policy is simply that where there is a need for a continuing position, this is in agreement with the trade unions, then that position has to become permanent.

Mr. Katzman: — It is interesting to note that the member who just spoke, the minister, is making accusations about everybody else, suggestions about what everybody else thinks, how everybody else thinks but when somebody suggests to him that he may be doing what he suggests everybody else is doing, he gets up in the air, he doesn't like it. I am very interested to note the member for Wascana made some comments from his chair about the rottenness of the Liberal government when they were in the province and how they used to always do this and you used to accuse them of being wrong. I was not here in the House and I hope that no government should ever do that. It is totally improper.

I have several more questions. Mr. Chairman, would you like to call it 5:00 o'clock and we'll start again.

The Assembly recessed until 7:00 o'clock p.m.